Escambia County Schools

2020-2021

Recovery Plan for Education

v1.0

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From your Superintendent of Education

Greetings to the Board, educational leaders, teachers, classified staff, parents, students, and all residents of Escambia County Alabama:

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and state of emergency declared by Governor Kay Ivey, Alabama schools have been closed since March 16, 2020, and remained closed through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. There is an understanding that education as we know it today will be changed tremendously in numerous unprecedented ways. It is incumbent upon educational leaders to begin taking concrete steps to restore, reconstruct, and re-design education as we know it today. The COVID-19 pandemic has in many ways changed our educational, economic, societal, and everyday way of life. As a result, we are now faced with an extraordinary challenge that will require the deployment of our individual and collective expertise to address the needs of students, families, staff, faculty, and school communities. Now is the time for each and every one of us to show conviction and courage in the decisions that are made, based upon historic changes not only in the state of Alabama, but also worldwide.

The effects felt by COVID-19 have been widespread and created impacts unlike anything that we have ever seen. I want to commend the people of Escambia County Alabama for your resilience and the quick manner in which you responded to the COVID-19 outbreak. Thank you for all that you have done to help keep our students safe and able to continue learning.

As we prepare to move into the reopening of our schools, we provide this guidance as a "how to" for safely reopening our schools. In it you will find answers to many questions, including the need for social distancing and types of recommended personal protective equipment.

I am honored to know that each of you has had a voice and played a role in the reopening of our schools. This guidance is also informed by the technical assistance and advice of many health and safety organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and the Alabama Department of Public Health. I want to thank the Honorable Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, her staff, our partners in the Legislature for their support in this endeavor, and all the staff at the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) who have contributed their expertise throughout this process.

We know that guidance is only as good as its implementation, so think of this as the beginning of the conversation—not the end. We know that for many of us, this is one of the toughest challenges that we will ever face, perhaps in our lifetime. But when it comes to ensuring that our students continue receiving a high-quality education—and doing so safely—we must rise to meet the challenge. I am inspired by how we have come together to make it this far.

I could not be prouder to be your superintendent. We are stronger together, we can do more together, and I thank you for all you are doing together to support students and their families.


John J. Knott

Strategies for Moving Forward

This document presents a number of strategies and considerations for school systems as communities move forward together to embrace the new normal of conducting school operations during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Reopening of, and re-entry into school buildings is dependent on the trends and key data points referenced in the Governor's "Alabama Achieves: Roadmap to Reopening Schools."

Not all options for school recovery operations fall into one of the phases identified in the Roadmap to Reopening. The goal with each of the topics addressed is to assist in the articulation of a vision that can be easily communicated to members of the school community. We all want students and educators to feel comfortable and safe returning to school environments.
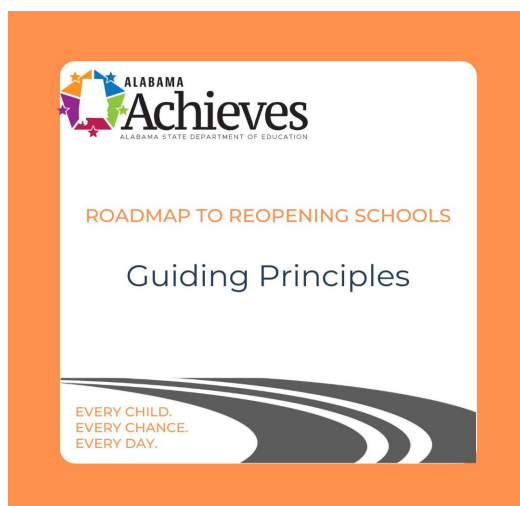
The best way to do that is to identify solutions that make transitions to and from online learning and a return to some form of in-person instruction, as seamless as possible. We have provided a checklist of items and considerations for our school system.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic affected entire communities, states, and the world and led us on a journey none of us thought we would experience in our lifetime. Our communities and families have experienced physical, emotional, health, and financial strains. The high levels of stress and trauma experienced during this time have highlighted the resiliency, strength, and power of ourselves and the importance of our school communities.

We are all working collaboratively with our local county health officials and community partners to plan on how to safely reopen schools. The intent of this document is to be a guide for local discussion on reopening schools. It is not a "one-size-fits all" document; rather, it is a document that honors the varied local contexts of each of our voices. This guidance document was developed with the most current information known at the time and may be updated as new data becomes relevant. This guide will provide checklists, essential questions for consideration, and examples of best practices. Guidance on standards and more detailed information for quality distance learning is currently being developed by our leadership team and will be available on our website as it becomes available. While the guidance by its nature is not a mandate, this guidance serves as a "how to" plan to safely reopen. We will continue to work with our local health departments and local stakeholders to ensure that their protocols align with the most current scientific knowledge and community expectations. It is also reasonable to expect that the protocols schools implement will change as the local conditions change.

What has been highlighted during this pandemic is the importance of paying attention to the social–emotional well-being of our students, families, and staff. We encourage everyone to keep the emotional well-being of all at the forefront of their decision making. This is also a time to reflect on systems that may not have worked for every child, and we encourage you to please continue to eliminate the barriers

to student success that existed before the closure. All of this is difficult work and we should work to be inclusive and collaborative from the start of planning with community stakeholders (i.e., students, families, teachers, staff, community representatives, and other partners). We have an opportunity to align and connect our reopening plans with safety in mind while utilizing inclusive, distributive, and collaborative leadership grounded in continuous improvement. We have an unprecedented opportunity to improve how we care for and educate each child. Let's work to enhance the public good of our public schools as we implement new, student-centered designs.

Guiding Principles

Five principles should guide all planning, decision-making, and execution of return to school/work at Escambia County Schools:

- Transparent as relates to what we know and what we do not know. Clear communication about what we can control and what is outside of our control.

- Equitable. Decisions focus on what is best for all students, families, and staff, especially those most impacted by educational inequities and COVID-19.

- Listen to stakeholders and experts to understand the realities on the ground and brainstorm creative solutions.

- Safety first. We will leverage science, data, and public health leadership to inform decisions.

- Decisive. Given the size and scope of the challenge, we must move deliberately and make tough choices. We will make mistakes, and we will adapt quickly as variables on the ground change.

Coronavirus Glossary: Key Terms About the Pandemic Explained

The following terms frequently occur throughout this report. To assess, consider, and understand the coronavirus scenarios, establishing a shared vocabulary is critical.

Antibodies: An antibody is a blood protein that the immune system makes as a response to an invader (pathogen), such as a virus. Antibodies are unique to a particular pathogen; when a person has antibodies for the infection caused by the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, called SARS-CoV-2, it means that the person has been exposed to the virus and the body has mounted an immune response.

Community spread: Community spread means people have been infected with the coronavirus in an area, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including some who don't know how or where they became infected.

Containment: Containment strategies are used at the beginning of an outbreak. It helps officials track the spread of the virus or disease within a community and then uses isolation or quarantines to keep those infected individuals from spreading the disease to other people.

COVID-19: COVID-19, also called coronavirus disease 2019, is the respiratory disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, the technical name for the new coronavirus. COVID-19 is part of a family of coronavirus diseases that include the common cold, SARS, and MERS.

COVID Pneumonia: A complication of COVID-19 infection, this is a lung infection in which inflammation causes air sacs in the lungs to fill with fluid or pus. Ultimately this causes hypoxemia (low blood oxygen levels).

Epidemic: COVID-19 was declared an epidemic before it was a pandemic. An epidemic occurs when a disease rapidly spreads to a large number of people within a community, population, or region. An epidemic is a sudden increase in the number of cases of a disease — above what would normally be expected. The term "outbreak" has the same definition, though experts often use this term when the geographic area is smaller.

Immunocompromised: People who are immunocompromised have a weakened immune system, meaning their white-blood-cell counts are low or they have other conditions that make it harder to fight off infections and diseases. Examples of people who are immunocompromised include cancer and transplant patients who are taking certain immunosuppressive drugs, people living with HIV/AIDS, and people with inherited or acquired diseases that affect the immune system (including but not limited to diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and lupus).

Incidence: Incidence refers to the number of individuals who develop a specific disease or illness (like COVID-19) during a given period of time, according to the CDC. The incidence rate is the number of new cases of a disease existing in a population at a specific time divided by the total number of people at risk for that disease in that population.

Incubation: The period between when a person is first exposed to a virus and when they develop symptoms is known as the incubation period. Knowing the incubation period for the coronavirus can help experts know when the disease can be spread, even if a person is without symptoms.

Intubation: This is a medical procedure that may be used for people with severe COVID-19 who are unable to breathe on their own. A flexible plastic tube (a breathing tube) is inserted through the mouth into the trachea, the large airway from the mouth to the lungs. The tube is then connected to a machine called a ventilator that can move air to and from the lungs.

Isolation: If a person has a confirmed case of coronavirus, they are instructed to practice isolation, which may be at home or in the hospital, depending on how sick the person is. It's meant to keep sick people from infecting other people by keeping them away from everyone.

Pandemic: COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the WHO on March 11, 2020, making it the first time in history that a coronavirus caused such an event. A pandemic is the global outbreak of a disease; pandemics are usually classified as epidemics first, which is when a disease is spreading rapidly in a particular area or region. The opioid epidemic in the United States or Ebola in West Africa in 2014 are examples of recent epidemics.

Physical distancing or social distancing: Physical distancing, commonly referred to as social distancing, is the deliberate increase of physical space between people to keep them from spreading illness. Experts recommend staying at least six feet away from other people to reduce your risk of catching the coronavirus.

PPE or personal protective equipment: Personal protective equipment or PPE is equipment worn by healthcare workers to reduce exposure to the coronavirus. The CDC recommends that those caring for people with COVID-19 wear goggles or a disposable full-face shield, a respirator known as an N95 mask, a gown that covers their clothes, and clean gloves.

Self-quarantine: Given the incubation period, it's not always easy to know if and when exposure to the coronavirus has occurred. If a person has returned from travel to a high-risk area or has been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the new coronavirus, the CDC recommends that they self-quarantine for 14 days.

State of emergency: The U.S. government declared a state of emergency in order to try to contain the coronavirus on Friday, March 13, as reported in an article by ABC News. This is different from the "public health" emergency that was issued by the Health and Human Services (HHS) secretary Alex Azar at the end of January, which was made to help state agencies redirect funds and staff to address COVID-19.

School Start Dates

We are currently on schedule for students to return, Friday, August 7th. We will be accepting students on school campuses in stages beginning August 7th with a staggered entry start.

The schedule is for Traditional School (on school campus):
1. August 7, 2020 - All students with a last name beginning with A-G will come to campus.
2. August 10, 2020 - All students with a last name beginning with H-M will come to campus.
3. August 11, 2020 - All students with a last name beginning with N-Z will come to campus.
4. August 12, 2020 - All students will come to campus.

The schedule for the start of Virtual School:
1. August 7, 2020 - All virtual students who live in the Atmore area will come to ECHS for a Virtual School orientation and final registration.
2. August 10, 2020 - All virtual students who live in the Flomaton / McCall area will come to FHS for a Virtual School orientation and final registration.
3. August 11, 2020 - All virtual students who live in the East Brewton area will come to WSNHS for a Virtual School orientation and final registration.
4. August 17, 2020 - All virtual students will begin classes.

Purpose/Expectations for Staggered Entry Start to School:
- Students are able to learn new school procedures in place due to COVID-19 prevention in smaller groups.
- Students acclimate back to school in a small group setting.
- Teachers/staff will invest this time in getting to know students and assessing their individual needs.

Teachers and other school staff will be in assigned areas to welcome students to school each day. Each school will share their specific times, locations, and procedures for morning arrival of students. All school plans will incorporate guidelines to prevent large groups of students to be in an area together before class time begins. In general, the plans will direct students to their homeroom or first period class. Details will be provided in the school plans.

Communication Strategies

Multi-faceted communication strategies will allow us stakeholders' input in reopening decisions and to reinforce trust and confidence in the Escambia County Board of Education (ECBOE). The family and staff survey data will be used to inform the development and refinement of the implementation plan. Survey data will reflect:

- Family opinions about the ECS reopening plan;
- Staff comfort levels in returning to work and the supports they need to be successful; and

Communication strategies are designed to engage all stakeholders through ongoing and up-to-date information about the decision-making process and reopening plan. These strategies include:

- Clear and straightforward information to ease understanding about options, decisions, and timelines for fall;

- Direct communication via social media, email, and web site messages;

- Requested translation services in most frequently spoken home languages;

- Ongoing support for school-based outreach and communication tools; and

- Collaboration with stakeholder groups, community organizations, faith-based organizations, and businesses to help get the message to families and staff.

Children and Youth with Underlying Conditions in Schools

Nearly one out of every five children in the United States has a special healthcare need. Their care is often complex and warrants extra vigilance and care on the part of school health staff. Technical assistance, training, case-by-case consultation, and referrals to community and health resources provide school staff the information and skill training they might need. The school nurse provides health care services for students with underlying conditions through monitoring and triaging and oversees the health care plans for these vulnerable children.

All health guidelines for management of COVID-19 should and will be reinforced, including hand washing techniques, proper respiratory etiquette, use of hand sanitizer, temperature monitoring, social distancing, daily cleaning of the building and routine cleaning of high touch surfaces, the of use masks as appropriately needed, and other emerging guidelines in order to protect vulnerable students. The CDC has published a valuable resource entitled Considerations for Schools.

The school nurse, as part of the student services team will, as a matter of course, consult and advise other team members such as school counselors, school social workers, pupil personnel workers and school psychologists in their work with children with underlying health care needs. The school nurse may share health and medical expertise at team meetings to support educational goals at IEP, 504, and student service team meetings.

Parents of students with pre-existing conditions may have heightened fears about their child's return to school. The school nurse will want to maintain contact with parents and doctors, consult with the student's health care provider, and consider the special needs of students with underlying conditions to determine options for virtual learning or home and hospital instruction.

Preparation of the nurse's office is especially important to safeguard the needs of all students, including students with underlying conditions. Working with parents to provide any additional protective gear that might be needed, extra medication, and information about their child's current condition, are all vital to the successful return of students to their schools. The immediate implementation of the student's health care plan should include providing health education to the student related to signs/symptoms.

Health and Safety

The CDC has highlighted specific mitigating strategies to reduce risk of COVID-19 infection and transmission.

The health and safety of students and staff is the top priority when making the decision to physically reopen school campuses for use by students, staff, and others. Local educational agencies should work in collaboration with their local health officials in making the decision to safely reopen.

Now that the decision has been made to reopen, a clear plan and protocols has been established to ensure the safety of students and staff. This checklist focuses on guidance as we continue to collaborate with local health officials and community stakeholders, including families, staff, and others.

In August 2020 the ADPH issued a Back to School Toolkit providing information, recommendations, procedures, guidance, and resources for schools to follow for responding to the Covid crisis. This was supported, endorsed, and strongly recommended by the ALSDE. ECS's will use this as a guide for responding to the health crisis.

Safety & Wellness Measures- Parent and Home Prevention (First Screening)

If a child has a pre-existing condition, parents are advised to speak with their child's primary care physician about returning to school.

Parents will be encouraged to take students' temperatures and assess students before sending to school. Students who have a temperature of 100.4 or higher and/or are exhibiting symptoms should stay at home.

Parents will be encouraged to give appropriate contact information and make plans to ensure someone could check students out if needed. Please make sure that all information on your child's emergency card is current.

Parents should not allow students from taking non-essential items to school. Items taken to school should be sanitized as feasibly as possible.

Safety & Wellness Measures- Transportation and School (Second and Third Screening)

Transportation is the second checkpoint. Bus drivers will use clearly visible signage that students should not have fever or COVID 19 symptoms if traveling on a school bus. The signage will also outline COVID 19 symptoms as an educational tool. Bus drivers will not physically check each student to see if they have a fever, as it is impossible.

School is the final checkpoint. School staff should visually check for symptoms (which may include temperature checks if needed and/or confirmation with families that the students are COVID-19 symptom free.)

Faculty will limit the items sent home with students that need returned. Items sent home should be sanitized as feasibly as possible.

In the event a student begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 while at school:

- Teacher should call and inform the nurse.

- Teacher should have someone (administrator, office personnel, or other available staff member) escort the student to the nurse's office and then to a quarantine area.

- Teacher should notify the custodian so that the area can be sanitized properly.

- The nurse should notify school administrators and the parents.
- The school nurse will report case information to the Alabama Department of Public Health while following appropriate guidelines and maintaining privacy. (See Reporting).

- It is the responsibility and duty of the Alabama Department of Public Health to notify individuals of possible exposure to COVID-19.

- Be mindful of student privacy and share information with only "Need to Know" personnel.

- Students are encouraged to self-report to administrators, sponsors, or coaches if they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The student will then need to abide by applicable protocols. Students in this category may need to be quarantined for 14 days. Parents and students should understand that no student who misses any school-related activities will be punished nor will absences be counted against them.

In the event a student notifies the teacher that they or someone in their home has tested positive for COVID-19:

- The teacher should notify school administrators.
- If the student was recently in attendance at the school, the custodian should be notified so that the area can be sanitized properly.
- The school nurse will perform an assessment and if the student has symptoms or has been in close contact (less than 6 feet, for more than 15 minutes) with an individual that is positive, they will be isolated and a parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the student.
- If the student is symptomatic or is suspected of having Covid-19, The school nurse will report case information to the Alabama Department of Public Health while following appropriate guidelines and maintaining privacy. (See Reporting).
- It is the responsibility and duty of the Alabama Department of Public Health to notify individuals of possible exposure to COVID-19.
- The Escambia County School System will adjust procedures and reporting recommendations as new information is provided by the ADPH, CDC, and the ALSDE.

Reporting:
- The school nurse or principal shall report any positive or suspected case of Covid-19 using the ADPH online COVID-19 Report Card.
- Information needed in the ADPH on-line COVID-19 Report Card includes the list of students in the classroom, Teacher/staff names, guardians for the students and telephone numbers. Seating charts for bus and classroom may be uploaded in the ADPH on-line COVID-19 Report Card.
- The School Administrator and School Nurse will help to determine who are potential close contacts (6/15 rule) to the positive or symptomatic student or staff and include their information in the Covid-19 Report Card. Seating charts may be used as a tool to help determine who is a potential close contact and will be included in each Covid Report Card submission.
- School nurse or principal will communicate to potential close contacts that a representative from the Alabama Department of Public Health should be contacting them with further instructions.
- Letters notifying parents of possible exposure will be sent home with those students who are deemed close contacts by the school nurse or principal.
- The Escambia County School System will adjust procedures and reporting recommendations as new information is provided by the ADPH, CDC, and the ALSDE.

Isolation and Quarantine:

Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state/local health department or healthcare provider.

- Students and Staff with suspected covid and any potential close contacts will be isolated and sent home until COVID-19 is confirmed, other diagnosis is confirmed, or they are cleared by their healthcare provider or the Alabama Department of Public Health. The school may require a healthcare provider's release to return to school/work.
- If COVID-19 is confirmed the school nurse will advise close contacts (6/15 rule, masked or unmasked) to self-quarantine for 14 days from exposure, monitor for symptoms, and follow instructions from their healthcare provider or the Alabama Department of Public Health.
- The Alabama Department of Public Health should contact those with confirmed covid, suspected covid, or who were a close contact to provide specific instructions on isolation/quarantine time periods and when they are allowed to return to school/work. The school may require a healthcare provider's release to return to school/work.
- The Escambia County School System will adjust procedures and reporting recommendations as new information is provided by the ADPH, CDC, and the ALSDE.

Nurse Office Visits

- Limit well child visits with minor problems
- Teachers/Staff can call a school nurse before sending a student to them to limit the number of students in the nurse's office and limit exposure. Be sure to complete a nurse referral form.
- The school nurse will work closely with administrators in developing a plan to isolate sick children until someone comes and gets them.
- The school nurse will continue to develop Individual Health Plans for students with chronic health problems.
- The school nurse will assess the student and take appropriate actions. If indicated, student may be asked to wear a mask until someone comes and gets them
- School Nurse will sanitize and disinfect as needed.

Mental Health and Emotional Well Being

Research shows the importance of mental and emotional well-being for students and staff, which has both psychological and ultimately academic outcomes. Access to school counselors and school-based health clinics helps students. Counselors and school-based health centers will play an extremely important role in the adjustment period when buildings reopen.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

Routine healthy hygiene practices are a foundational measure to protect against COVID-19 and other illnesses.

ECS hand washing guidelines indicate that students should wash hands for at least 20 seconds after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing; before eating, and upon entering classrooms. Breaks will be

provided for hand washing. If soap and water are not readily available, sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol will be provided.

Face coverings Each school employee and each student will be provided with one facial covering at the beginning of the school year, and training will be provided to teachers to help students best use the facial coverings appropriately in the school setting. Parents may choose to have their child wear a facial covering at all times; if so, the school will support that decision but cannot guarantee its enforcement at all times during the school day. Specific rules for the use of facial coverings will be provided at beginning of year training sessions for school employees. Employees and students, in grades 3-12, will be expected to wear face coverings when social distancing guidelines cannot be consistently maintained (arrival/dismissal, change of classes, entering the lunchroom, small group work, etc). Any change in use of facial coverings will be governed by Alabama Health Department directives.

Additional protective equipment including face shields and gloves will be provided to our staff, as appropriate, for settings that require close human contact, such as for staff providing certain supports for students with disabilities.

Intensified Cleaning and Disinfection

Cleaning and disinfection measures will ensure the physical spaces, equipment, and materials students and staff come into contact with remain safe.

Daily sanitizing will be implemented for high touch areas (doorknobs, handles, fixtures, etc.) with a commercial grade sanitizing solution.

Restrooms will be monitored and cleaned more frequently throughout the day. Outside cleaning services will be assessed and completed, as needed.

Social Distancing Practices

ECS staff will employ social distancing strategies, as much as possible, to increase spacing between individuals, including adjusted seating arrangements for school buses and classrooms and posted signs to remind staff and students of 6-foot social distancing.

Additionally, staff will use strategies to minimize mixing between groups whenever possible. Specific practices will be customized for each school and may include designating building entrances by grade level, mapping traffic patterns through the school, and scheduling student and staff groupings to be as stationary as possible.

Ongoing Monitoring Practices

ECS will regularly communicate and monitor developments with local health department authorities regarding cases, exposures, hospitalizations, and any other relevant metrics that may require a change in school operations. In the event of an elevated number of cases in local health data or in the event of presumed or confirmed cases directly impacting schools or central offices, ECS will collaborate with the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) authorities to implement all necessary health and safety protocols. This could include short-term closure of one or more ECS facilities until health officials deem it safe to reopen. More information on preparations for future closures will be discussed as needed.

Additional Considerations for Reopening

As the ECS prepares for reopening schools, we recognize that there are additional considerations that must be addressed to ensure students, families, and staff are well supported in the upcoming transitions.

Supports for Staff

One goal of the ECS Reopening Schools Plan is to ensure that all staff—instructional, clinical, operational, and administrative—have the resources to feel safe and comfortable returning to the workplace.

Outside Visitors and Groups

During this COVID crisis, we will limit school access to outside groups
- Limit access to campus for parents and other visitors.
- Suspend the use of facilities by outside individuals or groups
- Establish protocol for accepting deliveries safely.

Work and Leave Options according to the CDC Guidelines

Provide updated resources and procedures, including:
- An updated telework regulation; Support accessing emergency leave, Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), and other related benefits; and
- Teacher placements will be contingent on student enrollment numbers in the full-time online program.

Personal Protective Equipment

Ensure staff have the necessary personal protective resources, as appropriate for their risk exposure, such as masks, gloves, and face shields, etc.

Health and Wellness

Provide staff with support and resources to address any personal health and wellness needs.

Professional Development

Provide staff with the information, guidance, and professional learning necessary to support virtual instructional practices, health, and safety.

Supports for Families

Another goal of the ECS Reopening Schools Plan is to ensure that all families have the tools, resources, and support to feel safe and comfortable as their children return to school. Elements of this family support model include the following.

Flexible Schooling Options

Provide families the opportunity to choose full-time online instruction or in-person instruction with social distancing in ECS school buildings. Caregivers are encouraged to make choices based on health and safety concerns rather than course or program availability. If no preference is received for a student, the student will automatically be enrolled for in-person instruction.

English Language Services

Provide written translations of documents and communications in the spoken home languages in ECS and provide oral interpretation for any family who needs this service.

Technology Support

The first point of contact for online help for students will be the teacher. If there is a problem with a student's device or connectivity that the teacher can't resolve then the teacher will contact the technology department and request assistance.

Athletics and Activities

Athletics and extracurricular activities support the goal of providing a well-rounded educational experience for students within the reopening process. ECS will follow all ALSDE, AHSAA, and CDC guidance for physical and social distancing, restricting the size of gatherings for indoor and outdoor spaces, disinfecting equipment, and other health and safety precautions. Guidance will be applied throughout reopening.

Athletic facilities

  a. **Social distancing.**

  (i) Employees shall not knowingly allow patrons or guests to congregate within six feet of a person from another household.

  (ii) Employees shall not knowingly allow patrons or guests to participate in athletic activities in violation.

  (iii) Employees shall take reasonable steps to prevent people from congregating in lobby areas, break rooms, and other common areas.

  b. **Limits on facility access.** An athletic facility shall limit facility occupancy as determined by the ALSDE, Alabama Department of Health, and school officials.

  c. **Facial coverings.** Each employee shall wear a mask or other facial covering that covers his or her nostrils and mouth at all times while in regular interaction with students or guests.

  d. **Sanitation.** An athletic facility shall take reasonable steps, where practicable, to regularly disinfect frequently used items and surfaces. In addition to complying with the requirements of this paragraph, operators of athletic facilities are strongly encouraged to read and implement the Alabama Department of Public Health's "Guidelines for Athletic Facilities," available at

  https://alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/assets/cov-sah-athletic-facilities.pdf.

Athletic activities

Effective May 22, 2020, at 5:00 P.M., persons attending or participating in athletic activities shall comply with the following rules.

  a. **Permitted team activities.** From May 22, 2020, at 5:00 P.M., until June 14, 2020, participation in team athletic activities is limited to practices that involve conditioning, skill drills, and similar activities, subject to the rules of this paragraph. Beginning June 15, 2020, participation in team athletic activities may proceed in any respect subject to the rules of this paragraph.

b. **Social distancing.**

   (i)   Players, coaches, officials, and spectators shall not congregate within 6 feet of a person from another household except to the extent necessary for players, coaches, and officials to directly participate in the athletic activity.

   (ii) Players, coaches, officials, and spectators shall refrain from high fives, handshakes, and other physical contact except to the extent necessary—and only to the extent necessary—for players, coaches, and officials to directly participate in the athletic activity.

c. **Facial coverings.** Players, coaches, and officials shall wear a mask or other facial covering that covers his or her nostrils and mouth at all times when social distancing can not be maintained, except when a player or official is directly participating in the athletic activity.

d. **Sanitation.** Players, coaches, and officials shall not share water coolers, drinking stations, water bottles, cups, or other drinking devices. Organizers of athletic activities shall take reasonable steps, where practicable, to regularly disinfect frequently used items and surfaces.

For purposes of this paragraph, "athletic activities" means "sports that involve interaction with another person of closer than six feet" and "activities that require use of shared sporting apparatus and equipment."

In addition to complying with the requirements of this paragraph, persons attending or participating in athletic activities are strongly encouraged to comply with any guidelines adopted by the relevant governing organization, if one exists for the athletic activity in question, to the extent those guidelines are consistent with the requirements of this paragraph.

In addition, organizers of athletic activities are strongly encouraged to read and implement the Alabama Department of Public Health's "Guidelines for Adult and Youth Athletic Activities," available at
https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/assets/cov-sah-athleticactivities.pdf.

Facial Covering	Physical Distance	Sanitization & Personal Hygiene
Facial coverings have been described as one method to reduce the spread of coronavirus by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). For students and visitors there is not state requirement for facial coverings. Facial coverings could certainly be a local option in some circumstances in and around schools. If facial coverings were recommended or required by the local school board or by an ordinance or executive order, then care should be given to make sure that:	Maintaining physical distance between persons is another method that may be employed to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus according to both CDC and ADPH. See guidance here. Maintaining physical distance will not always be practical inside school settings and there are no expectations to do so. However, local school systems can refer to guidance from the CDC and ADPH to help craft best practices. For instance, space may not allow placing six feet between	As is true with all viruses, proper cleaning and sanitization are important tools to kill viruses and, thus, reduce the spread of infection. Both CDC and ADPH have published guidance on proper sanitization. Care should be taken to make sure the appropriate sanitizers are purchased and that staff understand their proper application as well as safety precautions.

Proper signage is posted in and around places where face coverings are required. It is clear whether the school system is providing such coverings or expecting students/adults to provide their own. Instructions or recommendations are given on proper laundering/sanitizing of multi-use face coverings. As the discretion of the school, disposable facial coverings are provided for people who may arrive unaware of the rules. Individual needs are anticipated; facial coverings may be inappropriate for some people due to age, medical condition, etc. Instructional and learning needs are considered. For instance, in teaching reading in early childhood, seeing the teacher's face for phonological cues can be helpful to the learner; in one-on-one close contact, a face shield might be more advisable than an opaque covering. **For additional guidance and further considerations, please visit the ADPH and CDC websites.**	student desks, but it might be practical to place a little more space between desks and to face them all in one direction. Early childhood teachers might opt to instruct students seated in their desks rather than together on the carpet in a reading circle. **For additional guidance and further considerations, please visit the ADPH and CDC websites.**	Proper hand washing, and/or the use of hand sanitizers is also a tool to kill viruses and remove them from the environment, thus reducing the spread of infection. Teaching children to wash hands and to apply hand sanitizers in a safe and responsible manner is nothing new to schools. However, schools might consider heightened awareness of the importance of these practices. **For additional guidance and further considerations,** **please visit the ADPH and CDC websites.**

Field Trips - **All field trips for students are suspended at this time. Consideration for reevaluating field trips will be made once current risk levels allow. Local trips/travel for students are permitted (i.e., buses going to career tech campus)**

Use of Facilities: **Use of facilities by groups outside of the school are suspended at this time.**

School Sponsored Activities: **All school sponsored special activities (school dances, some homecoming activities, parades, etc.) are suspended at this time.   Consideration for special activities will be made once current risk/threat levels allow.   The school principal may request consideration of special activities by submitting a written request to the Superintendent.**

School Buses

The Alabama State Department of Education Transportation Department has indicated that local school systems may not be able to meet the demands of adherence to CDC recommendations, however, the Escambia County Board of Education has worked with State Department of Education Representatives and representatives from other school systems to come up with a set of considerations, recommendations and best practices designed to combat the spread of COVID-19 and keep our students as safe as possible when being transported. These recommendations and best practices will be updated as new information on COVID-19 is received.

Transportation operations will proceed normally unless otherwise indicated. The following procedures and recommendations will be implemented and encouraged to create a safer environment for your child and all of the other students we serve.

Inspections

All school buses are inspected according to the Alabama Department of Motor Vehicle Administration (DMV) Regulations and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Standards by our drivers prior to transporting any students, by shop personnel monthly and by the State School Bus Inspector yearly.

Routing Considerations

- A survey was conducted to attempt to determine the number of students who will partake of Escambia County Schools Transportation Services.
- Transportation personnel are reviewing routing considerations, daily schedules, and staffing to make adjustments, manage the number of students on buses and help combat the spread of COVID-19.
- Transportation personnel are currently working with the schools and the Special Education Department to make any necessary transportation adjustments for students with special needs.
- The addition of multiple bus runs is being considered in order to limit the number of students and time spent on the bus.
- Special needs buses which transport a limited number of students may be employed to help transport other students and limit the number of students on regular route buses in certain situations.
- Drop off times and procedures may be adjusted to promote social distancing.
- Procedures for bus passes and changes to drop off and pick up locations are being revised to provide consistent and manageable student populations on our buses.

Transporting Students

- Signage has been developed and will be placed on buses indicating the COVID-19 symptoms students should be aware of and when they should not ride the bus.
- Parents and students will be required to sign a notice emphasizing their responsibility to pre-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before entering the school bus.
- Students who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked not to ride the school bus until cleared by a physician.
- Windows and roof hatches will be kept open to allow for fresh air to circulate through the bus while transporting students.
- Parents and students will be instructed to maintain 6-foot distancing at the bus stop, and while loading and unloading students.
- Parents, students and staff will be instructed to wear face coverings (masks) at bus stops, on buses where a 6-foot distance cannot be maintained, and for as long as the identified threat level indicates it is necessary.
- Students will load back to front, unload front to back, and have assigned seating in order to limit contact, promote social distancing, and aid with contact tracing.
- Drivers will maintain an accurate seating chart for use in student identification and contact tracing.
- Students will be required to sit in their assigned seat, face forward, and keep their hands within the confines of the seat in order to combat the spread of COVID-19.
- The Transportation Supervisor will work closely with School Administration and parents to ensure students adhere to the bus rules.

- Family members and students from the same household will sit together when being transported.
- No more than two high school and middle school students and no more than three elementary school students will be allowed to sit in a seat.
- Students will be encouraged to sanitize their hands upon entry into the buses.
- Students will be required to sit in the same seat when traveling to and from athletic events and extracurricular activities.
- The seat adjacent to the driver will be left vacant and used as an isolation area for students exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
- A letter will be sent to parents letting them know that if they are not comfortable allowing their children to ride the bus they may consider transporting them.
- Transportation can be provided to a student who becomes ill and whose parents cannot provide transportation. Drivers will follow special precautions if this situation arises.
- Students will not be returned home on their regular bus route if they are exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 at school.

Driver Considerations

- Drivers will be trained in all necessary cleaning, sanitation and management procedures.
- Drivers and shop personnel's temperatures will be monitored daily. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or greater will not be allowed to transport students.
- The seat immediately behind the driver will remain vacant to provide the driver the recommended protection.
- Drivers will be provided the following appropriate personal protective equipment; masks, face shields, sanitizer, and gloves.

Cleaning the Buses

- All drivers and shop personnel will be trained and will assist with the cleaning and sanitizing of the buses.
- Additional help will be added to assist with cleaning and sanitizing the buses.
- All buses will be cleaned and sanitized with a CDC approved antiviral cleaner.
- Buses will be cleaned and sanitized after each route.
- Special attention will be given to sanitation of high touch areas of the bus.
- Electrostatic and other types of sprayers have been secured to aid in the sanitation process.
- A bus that has been determined to have been transporting individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 will undergo a 24-hour quarantine and deep cleaning prior to transporting students again. A spare bus will be used until the cleaning process can be completed.
- Cleaning and sanitation of buses will be monitored by the Shop Foreman.

Supplies Available on all Buses

- Hand sanitizer will be available on all buses.
- Masks will be available for students who need a mask.
- Masks, face shields, and gloves will be provided to all drivers and bus aides.
- Spray bottles, paper towels and CDC approved sanitizer will be provided for the cleaning of buses.

Physical Education/Playgrounds/Outside Spaces

Increase supervision to ensure physical distancing.

Physical education (PE) and intramural/interscholastic athletics should be limited to activities that do not involve physical contact with other students or equipment until advised otherwise by state/local public health officials.

Considerations for Remote/Distance Learning

The goal of the ECS Technology Department is to provide and support the best possible educational experience for our students. There will no doubt be challenges to accomplishing that goal this year. We hope to provide a flexible learning environment that will overcome those challenges and meet all of our students' needs.

There are three possible scenarios concerning instruction this school year. They are defined as "Traditional Classroom", "Virtual School", and "Remote Learning". Traditional Classroom instruction will be conducted as we have in the past with the addition of social distancing and additional health precautions. Virtual School is for students who wish to attend virtual classes from the very beginning of the school year. Remote Learning is designed for students who are enrolled in the traditional classroom but are required to be out of the traditional classroom for an extended period of time, or for emergency school closures. All three options are explained below.

Traditional Classroom

- ECS will provide devices for student use district wide
- Students will have to use the same device all day
- Students will have to provide their own headphones and any other peripherals they want
- Devices need to be sanitized and charged at the end of every day
- Individual schools will decide if and when students are allowed to carry the devices home
- Students will be responsible for the device and for reporting damage or malfunction to the teacher.
- The teacher will report the damage or malfunction to the technology department.

Virtual School

- A student will be enrolled in Virtual School at the start of the school year.
- A student will be required to stay enrolled in Virtual School until the end of the first nine weeks. The student can then choose to continue in the virtual classroom or drop and enroll in the traditional classroom. Once the decision is made to drop the virtual program they will be required to stay in the traditional classroom for the remainder of the school year.
- Students who enroll in the Virtual School must provide their own reliable internet access.
- Students who enroll in the Virtual School will be provided with a Chromebook to use on their internet access.
- Students will be responsible for the device and for reporting damage or malfunction to the teacher.
- The teacher will report the damage or malfunction to the technology department.

Remote Learning

- Students will be sent home with their assigned Chromebook for the duration of the at home stay.
- Students will be responsible for the device and for reporting damage or malfunction to the teacher.

- The teacher will report the damage or malfunction to the technology department.
- If the student does not have access to the internet at home, we will work with parents to secure the most reliable internet connection possible.
- If internet access is not possible we will work with the parents to find the safest, most reasonable way for the student to complete and return assignments.

Classrooms

Social distancing will be practiced in the classroom at all times. In the event that the classroom has tables or other furniture used in the place of desks, the teacher will make accommodations to ensure that social distance is being practiced according to the CDC guidelines.

Homeroom and/or First Period teachers will welcome students in their classroom upon arrival to school each day. There will not be a common area for students to congregate so special attention will need to be made to coordinate school arrival by transportation, car-riders and classroom teachers, who may be required to be on campus prior to the start of school.
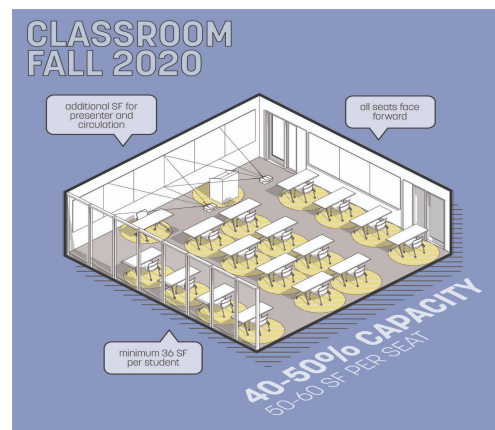
Determine maximum capacity for students of each classroom to arrange desk/seating at 6 feet intervals when feasible or possible if equipment or room allows. Dependent on the individual classroom, 6 feet spacing may not be possible.

In accordance with CDC and ALSDE guidance, ensure desks are apart and arrange desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.

If necessary, utilize other campus spaces for instructional activities (e.g., lecture halls, gyms, auditoriums, cafeterias, outdoors).

Arrange developmentally appropriate activities for smaller group activities and rearrange furniture and play spaces to maintain separation, when possible.

Address physical distancing objectives as students move between classrooms.

Seating Charts in Classrooms

It is required that seating charts be developed and used in the classroom to help identify which students may have been in close contact to other students who test positive for COVID-19. The seating chart gives a good visual of which students were in close proximity to the person diagnosed with COVID-19. This will provide beneficial information to the school about the extent of the exposure, as well as ADPH and its ability to do contact tracing and investigation. Without seating charts, the entire classrooms and buses may have to be sent home to follow the quarantine and isolation guidelines. A copy of all classroom seating charts should be given to the school principal and school nurse. Permanent assigned seating is highly recommended and should be practiced where possible.

Student Movement within School

It is recommended that staff and student groupings remain as static as possible. Whenever possible, the teacher should change classrooms instead of having the group of students change classes. This will

drastically limit student and staff exposure to larger number of individuals. It is recommended that any activities combining large numbers of students or staff should be eliminated as much as possible. In addition, it is recommended that students traveling to other buildings should be eliminated or minimized as much as possible.

STAR Program - The program will be suspended this school year.

Special Education

Additional protective equipment including face shields and gloves will be provided to our staff, as appropriate, for settings that require close human contact, such as for staff providing certain supports for students with disabilities.

Escambia County Schools will continue to provide specially designed instruction and related services to meet the needs of students eligible for special education services as defined in the Alabama Administrative Code. We will continue to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) through an eligible student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

The provision of special education and related services operates within the broader context of the general education curriculum and instruction. Though this situation has impacted the ability of local public agencies to fully implement the IEP, as written for some students. Now and during recovery, it is essential to provide FAPE and the provision for early intervention and special education services (IDEA) to the greatest extent possible.

General Considerations for Recovery Efforts for Students with Disabilities

Role of the family in the teaching/learning process. Parents of students with disabilities are a very important member, with a voice and are a decision maker, on the IEP team. Remote learning has increased the parent ability (with ongoing coaching and support by educators) to assist and to provide supplemental instruction and progress monitoring. Communication is a vital part of the process. There has to be constant communication between the teacher and the parent, to provide the support needed to accelerate student progress.

Integration of technology. During this period of continuity of learning technology has presented new uncharted opportunities for educators, school administrators, and families to obtain the maximum benefits from technology for students with disabilities to support learning and have meaningful parent participation. The purchase of Chromebooks by the Central Office will aid in the ability to provide a computer to students so that they will be able to access programs/work provided to students by their teacher, if receiving instruction remotely.

Maintain a focus on Social/Emotional Well-being. In recovery efforts, now more than ever, it is evident that schools play a critical role in the overall whole-child development process and quality of life for families.

Section 504

Escambia County Schools will continue to follow Section 504 in that we will provide appropriate accommodations through a 504 plan to students that have been deemed eligible. Now and during the recovery period it is essential that a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) is provided to meet the needs of the students.

Gifted and Talented

Escambia County Schools recognizes the unique needs of our students in its Gifted and Talented program. The students Gifted Education Plan (GEP) will be implemented as, to the fullest extent possible.

English Learners (ELS)

The equitable education of ELs is safeguarded by various civil rights laws and policies, as well as by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Our school system is required to provide instructional assistance and services to enable ELs to attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic language, and achieve at high levels in academic subjects. Our school system may need to be flexible and adapt their English Language Development (ELD) programs and service delivery models.

Strategies to Consider for Continuing English Language Development Services and Ensuring Access to General Education (ELS)

- Provide small group and individual support based on each ELs needs
- Use scaffolding instructional strategies
- Focus on developing productive language skills such as speaking and writing
- Use formative assessments to identify gaps
- Develop digital opportunities for review and recover

Considerations for Outreach to Families of English Learners

- Provide documents to families of ELs in an accessible format, including translated documents
- Build in time for translation in order to provide timely communication
- Consider personal check-ins with ELs and families, using an interpreter if needed
- Explore strategies to increase the access and understanding of families to online instruction and resources
- Provide support for the social emotional needs of ELs and families

Technology and Instruction

The Superintendent and the School Board approved the purchase of new chrome books so that every student will have access to a personally assigned ECS-provided device for use at school. With these enhancements, all students in grades 1-12 will be provided with a technology device (iPad or chrome book), as needed, to support learning in-person and online.   SchoolsPLP Online-Alabama Bridge District Licence was approved by the Board for our 2020-2021 Student Management System to support the curriculum provided by the ALSDE.

With guidance and support from the Superintendent's Technology Team, ECS is reviewing video-conference contracts and service level agreements. Priority is to ensure reliable vendor performance and a safe and secure virtual learning platform to support enhanced online instruction in 2020-21. We are recommending that Google Meet be the preferred video conferencing application.

Food Service

The Child Nutrition Program will follow all guidance from USDA, ALSDE, and ADPH regarding safe operating and food service procedures. The
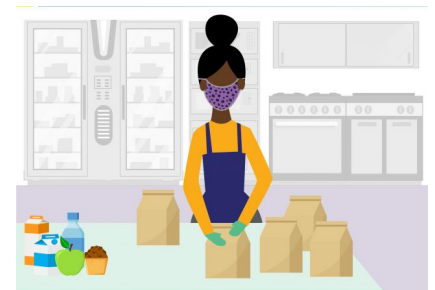
Child Nutrition Program will adhere to current USDA school nutrition guidelines and practices.

For lunch meal service, schools will practice social distancing. Other areas of potential meal service include the classroom, outside (weather permitting), or any other area the principal may have available. A rotation schedule can be made to accommodate classrooms. However, it may be essential to transition to all in-classroom dining.

Parents/Visitors will not be allowed to visit and dine with their students until it is determined that the current risk levels allow for such visits.

NO "home-made" food or beverage items will be allowed for a class or group of students for consumption (i.e. birthday parties, holiday parties, etc.). Only store-bought items may be delivered to the school office for such events.

Meals will be available for pick-up by Virtual/Online Learners upon request.

School Staff

Develop a plan that promotes physical distancing among staff in their work environment to reduce spread of the virus that includes:

Avoiding staff congregation in work environments, break rooms, staff rooms, and bathrooms.

Avoiding grouping staff together for training or staff development. Consider conducting the training virtually or, if in-person, ensure distancing is maintained.

Adjust staff schedules to accommodate student schedules and physical distancing strategies.

In accordance with CDC regulations and guidance, evaluate all workspaces to ensure that employees can maintain physical distancing to the extent possible.

Where possible, rearrange workspaces to incorporate a minimum of 6 feet between employees and students.

Promote and require physical distancing between workspaces or between employees and students and visitors if possible.

Prior to Arriving at Work

- Check your temperature at home - If you have a fever, contact your supervisor immediately and follow instructions before returning to work.
- Assess your wellness - If you notice an increase of symptoms (cough, fever, chills, muscle pain, shortness of breath, sore throat, a loss of taste or smell, diarrhea) related to COVID-19, contact your supervisor immediately and follow instructions before returning to work.
- Direct exposure - In the event you have been in contact (closer than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, contact your supervisor immediately and follow instructions before returning to work.

- Positive COVID-19 Results - In the event you test positive for COVID-19, you should notify your supervisor, contact payroll for appropriate leave steps, follow the directions of your medical provider, and obtain one negative COVID-19 test result before returning to work.

During the Workday

- Clock-in/out by swiping your badge three (3) times. This will alleviate you from touching the computer/keyboard.
- Phone, email, or text co-workers and avoid face-to-face contact when possible.
- Follow posted rules and keep 6 feet apart from coworkers when using common-use spaces (breakrooms, meeting rooms).
- If you must work closer than 6 feet to any other person, you should wear a mask to the greatest extent practicable per current health order.
- When using common-use appliances (microwaves, refrigerators, ice makers and copy machines), you should wash your hands with soap and water prior to use.
- Coffee pots and water fountains should not be used until further notice. Single-serving coffee makers (Keurig) may be used, but the rules for common-use appliances apply.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Plan to meet cleanliness and disinfecting standards in school facilities and vehicles.

Overall Cleanliness Standards. Schools must meet high cleanliness standards prior to reopening and maintain a high level during the school year.

In accordance with CDC guidance, avoid sharing of electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.

Do not allow stuffed animals and any other toys that are difficult to clean and sanitize.
In accordance with CDC and ALSDE guidance, and in consultation with local public health officials, develop a plan that includes:

A safe and correct application of disinfectants using personal protective equipment and ventilation recommended for cleaning.

Disinfecting surfaces between uses, such as:

- Desks and tables
- Chairs
- Seats on bus
- Keyboards, phones, headsets, copy machines

Disinfecting frequently—at least daily—high-touch surfaces, such as:

- Door handles
- Handrails
- Sink handles
- Restroom surfaces
- Toys, games, art supplies, instructional materials
- Playground equipment
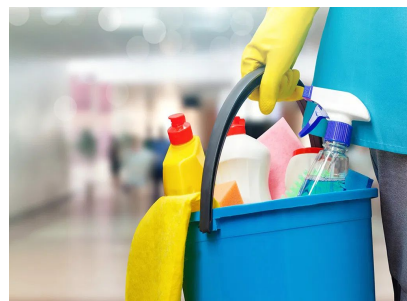
When choosing disinfecting products, using those approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) List

Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 and follow product instructions.
To reduce the risk of asthma related to disinfecting, programs should aim to select disinfectant products on the EPA List N with asthma-safer ingredients (hydrogen peroxide, citric acid, or lactic acid).

Avoid products that mix these ingredients with peroxyacetic acid, sodium hypochlorite (bleach), or quaternary ammonium compounds, which can cause asthma.

Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, following label directions for appropriate dilution rates and contact times.

When cleaning, airing out the space before children arrive. Plan to do thorough cleaning when children are not present.
Closing off areas used by any sick person and not using before cleaning and disinfection.

Make a Plan for Adequate Outdoor Air Circulation

In accordance with CDC guidance, ensure that ventilation systems and fans operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors and other methods.

Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk to children using the facility (for example, allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma symptoms).

Maximize central air filtration for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems (targeted filter rating of at least MERV 13).

Drinking fountains are not to be used as a direct source of drinking water. Students are encouraged (should) to bring their personal filled water bottles labeled with their name. Keep each child's belongings separated and in an individually labeled storage container, cubby, or area.

Conclusion

This report establishes a framework to plan and implement a safe, efficient, and equitable return to school. While informed by evidence and global best practices, it is limited by the boundaries of scientific knowledge about the coronavirus. There remains epidemiological uncertainty, a lack of established precedent, and insignificant data to make recommendations that entirely remove risk from returning to school. It is likely, that despite implementation of all of the recommendations in this report and the safety protocol, that educators and students may still be infected and develop COVID-19. The risk cannot be driven to absolute zero.

The recommendations provided within are in line with best practices being utilized in other countries and adapted to local circumstances in Alabama.
Our hope is that this report provides the information needed to help guide the difficult decisions ahead in the safest and most informed manner possible.

FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS

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Q: Are schools scheduled to reopen for the fall?

Yes, We are currently on schedule for students to return, Friday, August 7th. We will be accepting students on school campuses in stages beginning August 7th with a staggered entry start.

The schedule is for Traditional School (on school campus):
5. August 7, 2020 - All students with a last name beginning with A-G will come to campus.
6. August 10, 2020 - All students with a last name beginning with H-M will come to campus.
7. August 11, 2020 - All students with a last name beginning with N-Z will come to campus.
8. August 12, 2020 - All students will come to campus.

The schedule for the start of Virtual School:
5. August 7, 2020 - All virtual students who live in the Atmore area will participate in a Virtual School orientation and final registration.
6. August 10, 2020 - All virtual students who live in the Flomaton / McCall area will participate in a Virtual School orientation and final registration.
7. August 11, 2020 - All virtual students who live in the East Brewton area will participate in a Virtual School orientation and final registration.
8. August 17, 2020 - All virtual students will begin classes.

Q: Will school buses still run?

School buses will continue to operate as per normal routes and timetables.

Q: How should I talk to my child about COVID-19?

Talking with children about COVID-19 can help them understand and cope with the current situation. When talking about this to your child, make sure it's in a way that suits their age and development. When you do talk, listen to what's worrying them.

Q: How do we manage negativity around this virus?

We want to stay calm and provide a reassuring voice to our students. When tensions are high, sometimes we try to blame someone. It is important to avoid stereotyping any one group of people as responsible for the virus. Bullying or negative comments made toward others should be stopped and reported to the school. Be aware of any comments that other adults are having around your family. Y

Q: What is the difference between traditional learning, remote learning, and virtual academy?

Traditional learning takes place in the classroom and may involve a combination of paper and digital tools.

Remote Learning, provided by the classroom teacher, will be used in the event of school closure. Students who are in traditional classrooms will transition to digital learning on the Schoology platform and Google/Zoom meetings.

Virtual learning students are enrolled in an online program via computer delivery format.

Q: Do I have to send my child to school if they are sick?

Students are required to attend school unless they:
- are feeling unwell
- have a chronic medical condition or compromised immune system and are not able to attend school on advice from their medical practitioner
- live in a household with others that are deemed vulnerable to COVID-19 and are not able to attend school on advice of their medical practitioner
- have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have been required to self-isolate
- Schools will continue to provide support, as they would usually do, for students not able to attend school on advice from their medical practitioner.

Please speak to your child's teacher or the principal if you have any questions.

Q: Do employees and students have to wear a mask?

The required use of masks will be governed by the Alabama Health Order as directed by Governor Kay Ivey. (As of 6/26/2020, the current health order (Item 13c) requires the use of a mask or other facial covering by an education employee within 6 feet of a person of a different household.) School officials may have additional requirements dependent on the level of threat in our area.

Q: Will my school allow me to enter the school grounds to pick up or drop off my child?

Yes, you will be able to drop off and pick-up as you have been. However, we will have strict procedures in place regarding entering the building. Normally visitors are not allowed inside the building unless they have been called by the school personnel.

We encourage you to maintain physical distancing from other parents and teachers when attending school, including when dropping off and picking up children.

Visitors should have minimal access to the campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that visitors will not be allowed to eat lunch with their children in the cafeteria or visit for other non-essential activities. While we strongly desire parent and community engagement, we will work to collaborate and engage our community and family partners in new and innovative ways.

Q: What happens if there is a confirmed case at the school where my child(ren) attends?
If a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified in a staff member, student or child in one of our sites, the Board of Education will enact its protocols and follow ADPH, ALSDE, and CDC guidelines. If the school must close, we will communicate plans to all students and families.

Q: How does physical (social) distancing work in schools?

We will follow the CDC guidelines as it defines social distancing, also called "physical distancing," means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home. To practice social or physical distancing: Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people as much as possible.

Q: How will instruction be provided for students with extended absences due to a positive COVID test or mandatory quarantine?

If a student is out due to illness, they will be able to make up their assignments by completing assignments through remote instruction or will be provided alternative methods to continue the learning process.

Q: Will teachers and students be responsible for grades in the event of school closure?

Yes, we will provide student packets with lessons and/or online courses.

Q: If the school transitions to remote learning, can teachers still come to the school to work?

This would be based on Health Department and CDC guidelines.

Q: How does COVID-19 impact school supply lists?

School Supplies purchased by parents will be minimal. Schools will use funds to purchase school supplies as much as possible.

Q: Will teachers be responsible for cleaning or sanitizing classrooms?

Yes, we will ask all to help out and work together to make sure that our school stays clean and safe.

Q: How will I be expected to identify, and address learning gaps created by the March-May 2020 school closure?

Teachers are expected to provide formative assessments during the first few weeks of school to all students. These assessments include i-Ready for grades K-8. Teachers will collaborate with fellow teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators to plan for addressing the gaps in learning.

Q: Will I be expected to rearrange the desks in my room to maintain a six-foot distance between all students?

Teachers should maximize the distance between desks as much as possible. Unnecessary furniture should be removed from rooms to create more space between desks.

Classrooms that utilize tables for student and group seating will need to evaluate their ability to distance students with the tables and discuss, in collaboration with their school administrator, about the feasibility and availability of desks, dividers, etc. and/or their ability to use tables. Administrators should work with teachers to provide for the most optimal seating options possible for social distancing.

Q. Will schools have open-house, spring or fall conferences?

Schools will not be allowed to have open-house or any other scheduled gatherings.

Q: Which ALSDE requirements will we be held responsible for during the 2020-2021 school year?

All expectations of the Alabama Literacy Act should be met. Currently, all state testing, including ACAP and ACT, are planned for the 2020-2021 school year. The RTI process will be more vital than ever as students return to school after months of school closure. Other yearly processes such as teacher evaluation are expected to continue as normal.

Q: Will there be a school closure for the 2020-2021 school year?

Under current guidance we do not expect a school closure. In the event of widespread COVID-19 cases within our local communities or county, we will transition to our remote learning plan.

Q: What will determine if a transition to remote learning is necessary?

Decisions will be made regarding the transition from traditional learning to remote learning as a local decision based on consultation and guidance from ADPH, ALSDE, and CDC.

Q: Will classes be allowed to take field trips?

Currently, classes will not be allowed to take off-campus field trips. Updated guidance will be provided once field trips are deemed allowable.

Q. My classroom uses mostly hands-on materials and equipment. How should I adjust my activities to ensure proper learning takes place while ensuring student safety?

We have always, and will continue to, encourage students to actively participate in their learning. However, in the current pandemic climate, due diligence must be made to ensure items are sanitized before used or passed (if at all) among and between students.

Q: How can I utilize small group instruction while maintaining social distancing and ensuring student safety?

As educators, we know and understand best practices and the value that small group instruction brings to our students. We encourage the use of small group learning, but in a way that socially distances students to the best of our ability in a safe manner. We encourage faculty to work with their school administrators and instructional coaches to consider how they can conduct small group instruction in a safe manner.

Q: Can I have classroom visitors such as medical professionals, local leaders, policemen, firemen, etc. visit my classroom?

We certainly are limiting classroom visitors. We acknowledge the expertise and knowledge these professionals possess and the value they bring to our community and classroom. We encourage our faculty and staff to discuss options, with school administrators, for these individuals to be included in classrooms and lessons through innovative digital ways while we are under the current pandemic and while there is a need to minimize outside guests in our classrooms.

Q. With the minimization of library book checkouts and the support of online literary options through a virtual online library, how will librarians/media specialists support the classroom teachers

Each school's media specialist/librarian will work closely with the school administrator to develop a schedule whereby he or she can support the literary engagement of students and classroom teachers while providing and incorporating engaging literature into the classrooms. The library media specialist will also support teachers and students by ensuring students/teachers have the proper login credentials.

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with respect to action taken or not taken based on the contents of this document are hereby expressly disclaimed. The content in this document is provided "as is." No representations are made that the content is error free. The document is not an exhaustive list of every action that Escambia County Schools will need to return to or remain at school. Guidance provided by the Alabama State Department of Education is neither mandated nor required for use. The Escambia County School System has the authority and flexibility to meet their individual needs and be responsive to the community.